

USSN 09/401,730
Group Art Unit: 2878
Docket No. 161-P-DAL035BUS01

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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1. (Currently Amended) A securing device for releasably connecting at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to an optical apparatus where said optical apparatus comprises at least one photo-element mounted on a supporting element, said device including means for releasably connecting said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ in optical alignment with said at least one photo-element, said at least one optical fiber being brought into contact with said at least one photo-element, wherein at least a part of said device is made from a transparent material making a region of optical alignment in contact coupling between the at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ and the at least one photo-element externally visible.
 2. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 1, wherein said device comprises a cover made from a transparent material.
 3. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element is made from transparent material.
 4. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 1, wherein said transparent material is selected from the group comprising glass, polycarbonate, polymethyl methacrylate, polystyrene, acrylonitrile-styrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, polyphenylene oxide, polyurethane, polysulphone, polyamide, polyvinyl chloride, and polyphenylene sulphide.
 5. (Currently Amended) A securing device for connecting at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to an optical apparatus, said optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element, said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ connectable to said at least one photo-element, and at least one supporting element provided with at least one guide hole, having an axis, for said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, wherein said device comprises

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a single-piece slide provided with at least one fixed-size slot having a semi-circular portion having an axis, wherein said axis passes through the center of said semicircular portion of said slot, said slide moveable between a first and a second predetermined position, said second position being defined by stops, said axis of said semi-circular portion of said slot, in said first position of said slide, being coaxial with said axis of said hole of said supporting element and said semi-circular portion freely housing said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, and said axis of said semi-circular portion of said slot, in said second position of said slide, being out of alignment with said axis of said hole ~~and exerting such that said semi-circular portion of said slot exerts, in said second position of said slide~~, on said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ a force which keeps the at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ secured in said hole.

6. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 5, wherein said slide is provided with at least two slots.
7. (Currently Amended) ——— Securing device according to claim 6, wherein said optical apparatus is provided with at least two optical ~~fibres~~:fibers.
8. (Currently Amended) Securing device according to claim 5, wherein said device comprises a cover provided with at least one hole for passage of said optical ~~fibrefiber~~, said cover being provided with an enclosure supporting said slide for slidable movement, and housing an elastic means in engagement with said slide to keep said slide in said second position.
9. (Currently Amended) Securing device according to claim 5, wherein said semi-circular portion of said slot has a radius greater than a radius of said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~.
10. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 9, wherein said semi-circular portion of said slot has a projecting arm.

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11. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 9, wherein said slot is substantially C-shaped.
 12. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 10, wherein said semi-circular portion has a notch capable of imparting elasticity to said arm.
 13. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 8, wherein said slide is provided with a pin which is used for centering said elastic means.
 14. (Currently Amended) A securing device for connecting at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to an optical apparatus, said optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element, said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ connectable to said at least one photo-element, and at least one supporting element provided with at least one guide hole, having an axis, for said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, wherein said device comprises

a slide provided with at least one slot having a semi-circular portion having an axis, said slide moveable between a first and a second predetermined position, said second position being defined by stops, said axis of said semi-circular portion of said slot, in said first position of said slide, being coaxial with said axis of said hole of said supporting element and freely housing said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, and said axis of said semi-circular portion of said slot, in said second position of said slide, being out of alignment with said axis of said hole and exerting on said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ a force which keeps said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ secured in said hole, wherein said slide is made from transparent material making a region of optical alignment in coupling between said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ and said at least one photo-element externally visible.
 15. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 8, wherein said cover is made from transparent material.
 16. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 5, wherein said supporting element is made from transparent material.

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17. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 14, wherein said transparent material is selected from the group comprising glass, polycarbonate, polymethyl methacrylate, polystyrene, acrylonitrile-styrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene, polyphenylene oxide, polyurethane, polysulphone, polyamide, polyvinyl chloride, and polyphenylene sulphide.
18. (Currently Amended) Device for releasably connecting at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to an optical apparatus, said optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element mounted on a transparent supporting element, said device including means for releasably connecting said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to said at least one photo-element, said at least one optical fiber being brought into contact with said at least one photo-element, wherein said device includes a cover made of a transparent material making a region of contact coupling between the at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ and the photo-element externally visible.
19. – 21. (Previously Canceled)
22. (Previously Amended) Securing device according to claim 5, wherein said at least one photo-element is mounted on said supporting element.
23. (Currently Amended) Optical equipment comprising:
an optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element,
at least one optical fiber, and
a device for releasably connecting said at least one optical fiber in optical alignment with a respective one of said at least one photo-element, said at least one optical fiber being brought into contact with said at least one photo-element,
wherein at least a part of said releasably connecting device is made from a transparent material in order to make a region of optical alignment in contact coupling between the at least one optical fiber and the at least one photo-element externally visible.

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24. (Previously Added) Optical equipment according to claim 23, wherein said transparent material is selected from the group comprising glass, polycarbonate (PC), polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA), polystyrene (PS), acrylonitrile-styrene (SAN), acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS), polyphenylene oxide (PPO), polyurethane (PUR), polysulphone (PSU), polyamide (PA), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and polyphenylene sulphide (PPS).

25. (Previously Added) Optical equipment according to claim 23, wherein said optical apparatus comprises a supporting element for said at least one photo-element, said supporting element being made from a transparent material.

26. (Currently Amended) Optical equipment comprising:

at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~,

an optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element, and a supporting element provided with at least one guide hole, having an axis, for a respective one of said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, and

a device for connecting said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ to a respective one of said at least one photo-element,

wherein said connecting device comprises a single-piece slide provided with at least one fixed-size slot having a semi-circular portion having an axis, said slide being movable between a first and a second predetermined position, said second predetermined position being defined by stops, said axis of said semi-circular portion of said at least one slot, in said first position of said slide, being coaxial with said axis of said at least one hole of said supporting element and freely housing said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~, and said axis of said semi-circular portion of said at least one slot, in said second position of said slide, being out of alignment with said axis of said at least one hole and exerting on said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ a force which keeps said at least one optical ~~fibrefiber~~ secured in said at least one hole, said slide being made from a transparent material making

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a region of optical alignment in coupling between said at least one optical ~~fi~~bre
fiber and said at least one photo-element externally visible.

27. (Currently Amended) Optical equipment comprising;

at least one optical ~~fi~~brefiber,

an optical apparatus comprising at least one photo-element, and a supporting
element provided with at least one guide hole, having an axis, for a respective one
of said at least one optical ~~fi~~brefiber, and

a device for connecting said at least one optical fiber to a respective one of said at
least one photo-element,

wherein said connecting device comprises a slide provided with at least one slot
having a semi-circular portion having an axis, said slide being movable between a
first and a second predetermined position, said second predetermined position
being defined by stops, said axis of said semi-circular portion of said at least one
slot, in said first position of said slide, being coaxial with said axis of said at least
one hole of said supporting element and freely housing said at least one optical
~~fi~~brefiber, and said axis of said semi-circular portion of said at least one slot, in
said second position of said slide, being out of alignment with said axis of said at
least one hole and exerting on said at least one optical ~~fi~~brefiber a force which
keeps said at least one optical ~~fi~~brefiber secured in said at least one hole, wherein
said slide is made from transparent material.

28. (Currently Amended) Optical equipment according to claim 26, wherein
said connecting device further comprises a cover, said cover is provided with at
least one hole for passage of said at least one optical ~~fi~~brefiber and with an
enclosure, said enclosure supporting said slide for slidable movement and housing
elastic means to maintain said slide in said second position.

29. (Previously Added) Optical equipment according to claim 28, wherein said
cover is made from a transparent material.